

Peer Review Best Practices

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What does **better** peer review look like?

Gold Standards



Peer review gold standards

5 essential areas



Integrity Peer review establishes that the work is reliable and potentially reproducible.



Ethics Peer review establishes that the work was conducted ethically.



Fairness Peer review is objective and impartial.



Usefulness Peer review is constructive and helpful.



Timeliness Peer review provides timely feedback for researchers.

What recommendations can we make for better practice

How do we make it happen on our journals



Read our open access article [“What does better peer review look like?”](#) in *Learned Publishing*.



Integrity

- Authors receive thorough, well-thought-out reviews
- Quality of the research methods is assessed
- Articles are as complete as possible
- Publication decisions are based on the reliability and completeness of the research
- Data sharing and citation are encouraged or expected
- Concerns raised by readers are received, considered, and acted upon



Ethics

- Editors and reviewers respect the confidentiality of manuscripts
- Research complies with ethical regulations and community expectations
- Submitted manuscripts are original – not submitted or published elsewhere
- Manuscripts are checked significant textual overlaps and plagiarism
- Efforts are made to screen for potential research misconduct



Fairness

- Authorship criteria are established, applied, checked
- Major comments from reviewers are communicated in the first round of peer review
- Editors' and reviewers' conflicts of interests are managed
- Authors' close colleagues and collaborators are not invited to be peer reviewers
- Acknowledgement is given to people who helped the invited reviewer complete their peer review
- Efforts are made to address bias



Usefulness

- Reviewers are presented with manuscripts that are ready for review
- Peer review helps researchers better express their work
- Information on how journals evaluate content and choose what to publish is readily available
- Peer reviewers get recognition for their work
- Peer review is improved based on regular review



Timeliness

- Timeliness is a shared objective for editorial teams
- Authors have information about the timing they can expect from a journal
- Timing is shared between all parties and expectations set and managed
- Automated tools are used to help maintain and improve timeliness and quality

Better Peer Review Self-Assessment

A self-assessment for journal teams
focused on ethics, integrity, fairness,
usefulness, and timelines





The BPR User Experience

The BPR Self-Assessment asks 50 questions each with 2 parts, and takes around 55 minutes to complete.

[Version 2.1](#) for societies and people without a Wiley login
The next slides show what users get in return for that effort

What is the BPR Self-Assessment?

It's a service that helps you to reflect on your work with peer reviewers, to reflect on your editorial policies, and to reflect on your work with authors. Your answers will help you identify areas where your practice is great, and areas where you may want to make improvements.



We give users three things



Think and Reflect

Users get the chance to reflect, compare, celebrate, improve via the Better Peer Review Self-Assessment

Immediate Feedback

Users get immediate on-screen feedback, plus an immediate record of their answers in an email

Quartile, Badge, Analysis, Tips

Later, every user gets an email with their:

- BPR Quartile
- BPR Badge
- BPR Data Visualization
- “How to improve” tips in the “BPR Key”

We can see what “better” looks like

For example:

Do you give reviewers instructions for how they should write a sufficiently thorough review?

- *We use an array of custom questions in the reviewer's score sheet to help the reviewer's structure their reviews. If the reviews are insufficient the editors will contact them and ask for more detail.*

Do you screen possible reviewers to avoid inviting people who work with (or recently worked with) the authors?

- *In current editor training I highlight this as an important feature when editors select reviewers, I then screen reviewers when they are invited to review and we have a good flagging system in place.*

Do you collect and declare potential conflicts of interest for your editors on the journal website?

- *We publish these, alongside a code of conduct, and we revise annually.*

Do you ask authors to describe each person's contributions to their work (e.g. using CRediT: see <https://casrai.org/credit/>), and do you publish in their article a statement regarding these?

- *All authors have to provide an author contribution statement - and these are always published. We are looking into CRediT now.*

Enabling Diversity

Expanding the reviewer pool



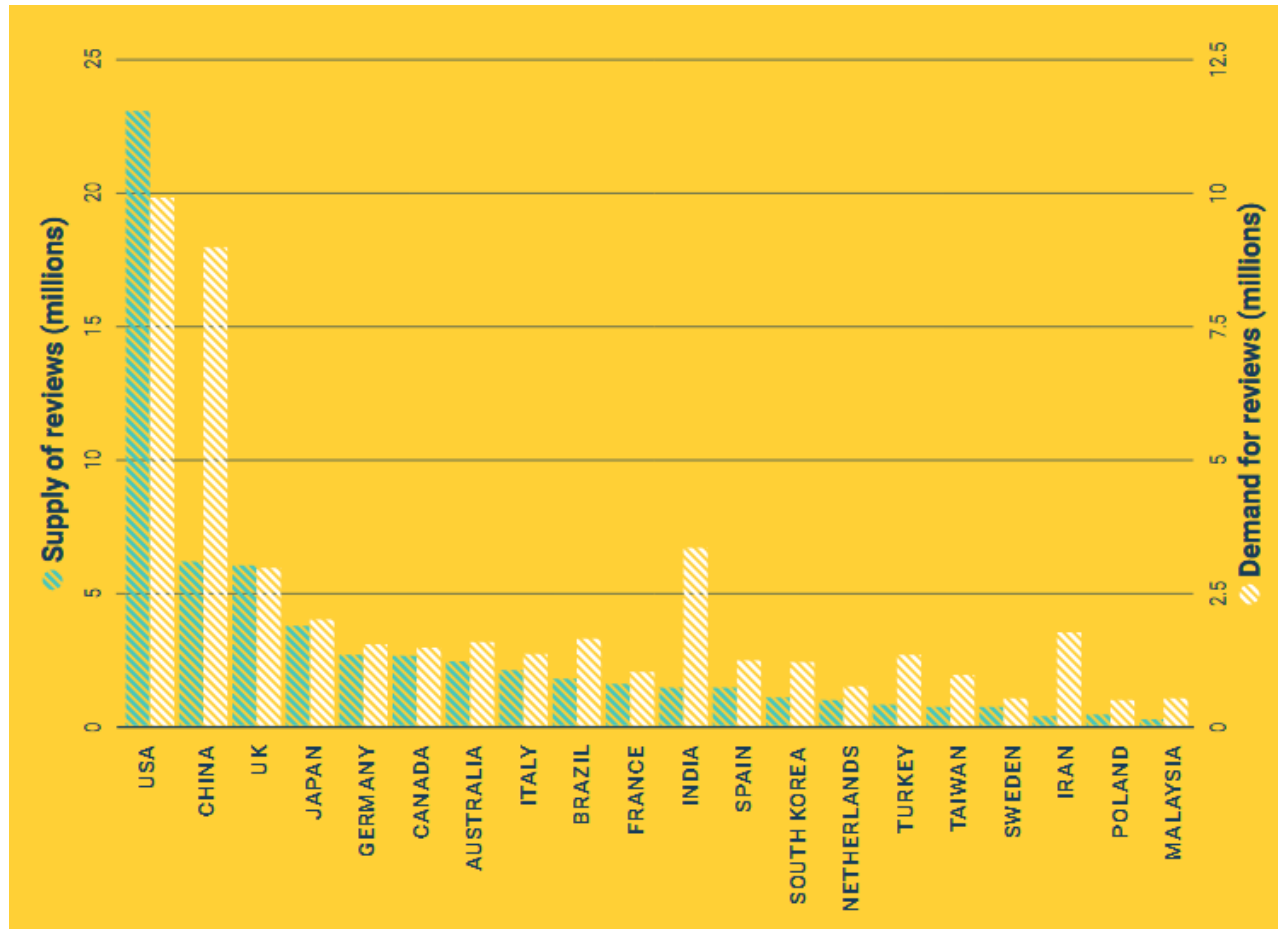
- Impartiality is at the **heart** of research.
- One way to ensure impartiality is to ensure the diversity of the reviewer pool

Discussion:

What do you do to increase the diversity of your reviewer pool?

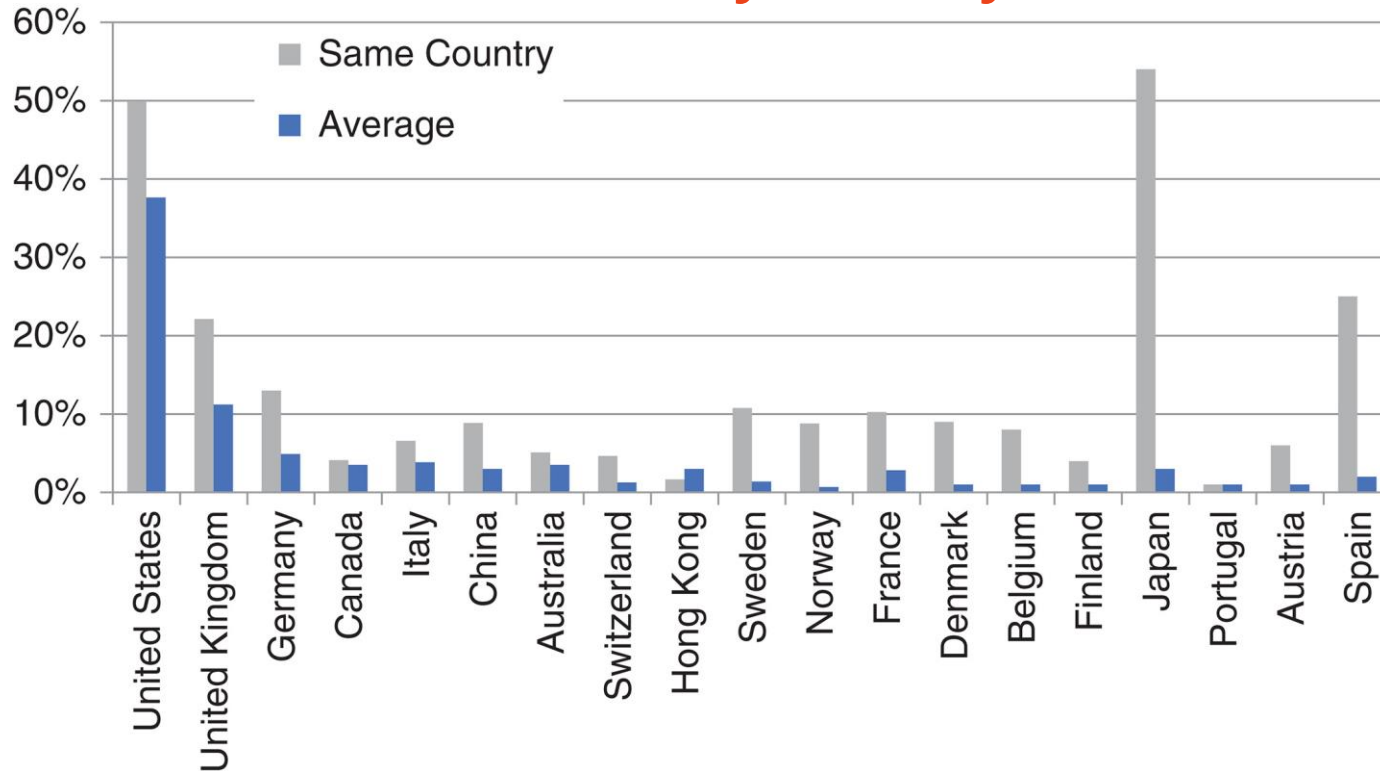


Supply and Demand of Peer Review by Region



Source: Global State of Peer Review 2018, Publons

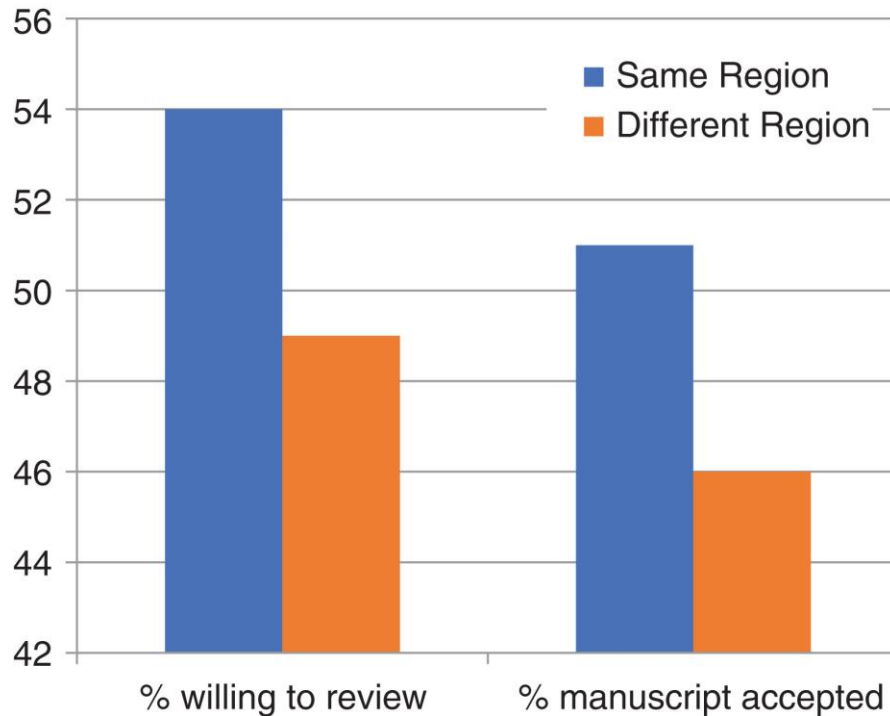
Invitations to reviewers by country



Invitations sent to reviewers in the same country as the Editors-in-Chief (EiC) compared with the average invitations sent to that country by all journals in the data sample, expressed as a percentage of invitations sent by EiCs of that country.

Source: Gaston, T. and Smart, P. (2018), What influences the regional diversity of reviewers: A study of medical and agricultural/biological sciences journals. *Learned Publishing*, 31: 189-197. doi:10.1002/leap.1155

Willingness to review and likelihood of acceptance



Willingness of reviewers to accept invitations to review (expressed as a percentage of invitation responses) and the likelihood of the articles being accepted (expressed as a percentage of manuscripts), comparing cases where the region of the reviewer and corresponding author is the same and cases where the region differs.

Source: Gaston, T. and Smart, P. (2018), What influences the regional diversity of reviewers: A study of medical and agricultural/biological sciences journals. *Learned Publishing*, 31: 189-197. doi:10.1002/leap.1155

Reviewer Locator

- helps identify potential reviewers from the Web of Science
- runs automatically for each new submission that includes an abstract
- yields up to 30 results
- includes up to three papers published by the potential reviewer

Publons

- shows an expert's verified review and editorial history across all journals
- 'Suggested Reviewers' tool allows you to see a list of researchers your journal could be asking to review, but currently isn't
- Assess suitability of unfamiliar reviewers. See their level of review experience and the other journals they review for



Transparent Peer Review



- identity of the author and the reviewers are known by all participants
- encourages accountability and civility, generally improving the overall quality of the review and article
- reviewers are more motivated to do a thorough job since their names and sometimes comments appear as part of the accepted, published article

Double-Blind Peer Review



- reviewers don't know the identity of authors, and vice versa
- research is judged fairly, keeping bias out of the equation
- author and reviewer benefit from some level of protection against criticism

Transferrable peer review

Manuscript Transfer Program



Transferrable peer review

Thousands of papers are rejected from Wiley journals every year , many of which go on to publish elsewhere

Authors have to spend additional time going through the submission process at another journal

Reviewers may also be asked to review the manuscript again at the subsequent journal.



Manuscript Transfer Program

- Rejected articles of suitable quality can have the option to automatically transfer their manuscript to another Wiley journal.
- The receiving journal will then undertake further editorial evaluation.
- Previous reviews are taken into account, although in some cases the editors may choose to take advice from additional referees.



Benefits of the Manuscript Transfer Program

- Authors will not need to make any changes to their manuscript at the transfer stage
- Quick decision times as sharing reviews along with the referred manuscript saves time for authors seeking an alternative route
- Sharing reviews also lessens the burden of the reviewer pool in your community
- Rapid publication for authors as turnaround times will be shorter than beginning peer-review with another journal



Reject & Resubmit – Language

Many articles are rejected based on poor English. Instead of rejecting these, Editors should consider utilizing the reject and resubmit option for articles where the science and scope seem suitable for the journal.

This lets the author know that their article has merit but it needs to be checked by either an English knowledgeable colleague or professional service and encourages them to submit to the journal again.

Avoiding common mishaps

Tools and advice to avoid ethical issues



Reviewer Fraud

When an author nominates as a reviewer the name of a real, qualified scientist but provides a fabricated email address, which sometimes belong to the author himself/herself or a close collaborator.

Things to consider when using recommended reviewers

- Use recommended reviewers with institutional email addresses
- Perform a web search to verify reviewer names, emails, and qualifications
- Request, or consider requiring, an ORCID from reviewers
- Check the turnaround time of the review. Was it returned unusually fast?
- Consider if the reviews are superficial and overly favorable



Plagiarism

Ithenticate

Scans the internet and compares all online publications to the submitted manuscript

Anything with a similarity of over 15-20% should be carefully looked at



| Avoiding common mishaps

Authorship Disputes

Putting down names of people who took little or no part in the research (gift authorship) or by leaving out names of people who did take part (ghost authorship)

CRedit

High-level taxonomy used to describe each contributor's specific contribution to the scholarly output.

Roles include: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing



Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE)

- Non-profit organization dedicated to promoting integrity and research and its publication
- Wiley supports membership of COPE for all Wiley editors
- Flowcharts provide advice for cases of suspected misconduct:
<https://publicationethics.org/resources/flowcharts>





Our next steps.....

performing better peer review is a responsibility shared by the whole editorial team: editors, managing editors, associate editors, assistants, publishers, reviewers.

Teams can share a culture of continual improvement where they keep reviewing the process to identify where they can make improvements to make peer review better for all.

Thank you for your participation!

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